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## Viewing cable 09STATE61209, MOVING GREEKS AND TURKS FORWARD ON AEGEAN ISSUES

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09STATE61209**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">09STATE61209</a>	<a href="#">2009-06-12 23:17</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Secretary of State</a>

Appears in these articles:

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/12/2019

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SUBJECT: MOVING GREEKS AND TURKS FORWARD ON AEGEAN ISSUES

REF: ATHENS 971

Classified By: EUR DAS Matthew Bryza for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. This is an Action Request. Please see para 5.

¶2. (C) The Department agrees with the joint assessment (Ref A) from Embassies Athens and Ankara that there is an urgent need to ease the recent uptick in provocations over the Aegean, diffuse tensions, and work towards resolving the underlying issues.

¶3. (C) As a first step, upcoming high-level visits (Turkish PM Erdogan to Athens June 20, Turkish FM Davutoglu to Corfu for the OSCE Ministerial June 28, and Greek FM Bakoyannis, pending visit to Ankara) may provide a new opportunity for the GOG and GOT to engage directly on these issues.

¶4. (C) Objectives: Embassies should pursue the following objectives with GOG and GOT officials to urge them to increase diplomatic efforts and decrease military actions over the Aegean.

-Ending Turkey's overflight of the two Greek-inhabited islands in the Dodecanese, Agathonisi and Farmakonisi.

- Prevent an increased defensive posture by the Greek military which could be perceived as provocative and increase the likelihood of an incident

- Reduce bilateral tensions -- especially between the Greek and Turkish militaries -- and pave the way for increased cooperation.

¶5. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Embassy Athens and Ankara are instructed to make the following demarche, at an appropriately high level (Under Secretary or above), and follow up as appropriate with military and Prime Ministry senior officials. These points should be delivered prior to Turkish PM Erdogan's June 20th visit to Athens.

(C) Ankara and Athens:

--The U.S. is very concerned about the rise in military activity and confrontations in the Aegean, both Turkish overflights and Greek intercepts, over the past six-seven months.

-- We fear such confrontations pose an unacceptable risk of an accident or other incident that will be in neither country's interest and could seriously damage bilateral relations. We see no advantage to their continuation, and are making parallel demarches in both capitals to express our grave concern.

--We continue to urge both sides to exercise restraint and to use the bilateral mechanisms established by you and Ankara/Athens, and are confident that doing so will reduce the current unnecessary tensions, as well as open the door to deeper bilateral understandings.

--Beyond this, a more concentrated effort could yield improvements in the specific issues underlying the current tensions, as well as open the door to deeper more substantial understandings.

--As you move beyond the current tensions, we urge both sides to review previous agreements and past suggestions to reduce tensions, including restrictions on armament and other operational aspects of air-to-air engagements, increased use of hotlines, and more willingness during political consultations to substantively address these issues.

--More generally, the U.S. believes that the time has come to consider resolving or better managing the suite of Aegean issues that divide you and give rise to repeated confrontations and risk of conflict.

--We welcome your thoughts on how best to reduce the immediate tensions, identify confidence building measures, and implement a more effective process to address outstanding Aegean issues.

--In our view, your two countries have made considerable progress in this regard in the late 1990s. As then, the U.S. remains ready to play a supporting role acceptable to both Greece and Turkey.

(C) For Athens Only:

--On your request, we have repeatedly engaged with senior Turkish officials, both military and civilians, on the Agathonisi and Farmakonisi over-flights.

--As part of this demarche, we are doing so again.

--At the same time, if you are to find a mutually acceptable outcome it is important to understand the Turkish concerns in response to Greek actions that challenge Turkish positions in the Aegean ) whether &aggressive8 flight information region (FIR) intercepts or unilateral militarization of areas that the Turks believe are treaty obligated to remain demilitarized.

--We cannot be as helpful in effecting Turkish restraint if Greece conducts itself in a provocatively aggressive manner, including selecting for military exercises islands whose militarization is disputed.

(C) For Ankara Only:

--As we have raised before, we urge you to cease your over-flights of the Greek islets of Agathonisi and Farmakonisi.

--As the two islands are inhabited, such overflights introduce a dangerous new element into the Aegean disputes between Greece and Turkey.

--This would be so under any circumstances, but in the specific case of Agathonisi and Farmakonisi, the U.S., as a party to the 1947 Paris Treaty, accepts that these islands are sovereign Greek territory.

--While in many Aegean issues Turkey raises positions that we either agree with or can easily understand, we have no sympathy for your position on these islands.

--Were a tragedy to occur or were this issue to gain major public attention, it would be difficult for us to avoid stating this U.S. position.

--On the other hand, we are raising with the Greeks as part of our parallel demarche our concerns with Greek behavior and initiatives which challenge the de facto status and which Turkey understandably views as requiring a response.

--In this regard, we reiterate the commitments to consult which SACEUR Gen. Craddock provided the TGS in January.

CLINTON